of Austrian arms would have out-dazzled that of the invincible legions of Prussia. The struggle between Austria and Prussia for the hegemony of the German Empire had only been provisionally settled in a single battle as late as 1866, It was obviously undesirable that Austrian military prowess should be elevated above that of the North German. No true Prussian could contemplate such a prospect with equanimity. or help its attainment with any enthusiasm, Falkenhayn was a Prussian from heel to helmet. From the national as well as the personal point of view, a German victory at Verdun was more expedient for his country than an Austrian victory in the Trentino.

Falkenhayn himself came pretty near an admission of this motive in stating his reason for rejecting Conrad's scheme.

> cc When we come to the question how we are to proceed against England's tools on the Continent, Austria-Hungary is pressing for an * immediate settlement of accounts with Italy. We cannot agree with that proposal. If we adopted it, it would advantage Austria-Hungary and her future prospects only, and not directly the prospects of the War as a whole.[51]*

Did Falkenhayn put these considerations frankly before his Staff? I should be surprised if he did. I feel confident that he never put pen to paper to express

or marshal those incentives to judgment. Did he ever even avow those motives to himself? Probably

*** General von Falkenhayn " General Headquarters, 1914-1916 and its critical Decisions/' pp. 315-316.**